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ABSTRACT

A post-baccalaureate, single-subject program for future secondary school teachers is described. This program contains the following features: (1) it is operated by a team composed of a teacher education department leader, faculty from other departments, master teachers, administrators, community persons, and candidates for the teaching profession; (2) candidates are offered experience in cross-cultural teaching in inner-city/suburban secondary schools; (3) the program is competency-based--each candidate is on an individual contract and meets the competencies through the use of modules; (4) all members of the team share in planning, counseling, supervising, and evaluating the candidate's fulfillment of the contract, the performance of other team members, and the total program; and (5) all activities are held at the school site or field center, encouraging participation on the part of master teachers and community persons. (JD)

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NORTH COUNTY PROGRAM

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NORTH COUNTY PROGRAM
SUMMARY

The North County Program is one of several developed by the Department of Teacher Education, California State University, Hayward to meet the requirements of the Ryan Act.

The program is one of three post-baccalaureate single subject (secondary) programs, each of which operates autonomously with a team composed of a Teacher Education Department leader, faculty from other departments in the University, candidates, master teachers, administrators, and community persons.

The North County Program, now in its fourth year, offers candidates a six-dimensional experience: cross-cultural (they all teach in two very different communities); inner-city/suburban; and junior high/senior high.

The program is competency-based; there are no courses; each candidate is on an individual contract; and meets the competencies through the use of modules or in ways which fit her/his personality or the subject being taught.

All members of the team share in planning, counseling, supervising, and evaluating the candidate's fulfillment of the contract, the performance of other team members, and the total program. Planning is done by the entire team at monthly meetings and evaluation is an integral part of the program.

All activities such as seminars, program team meetings, individual counseling, and conferences are held at the school site or in our Field Center, located between the two communities, thus encouraging participation on the part of master teachers and community persons.

COMPREHENSIVE EXPLANATION

A. DESCRIPTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM

The North County Program is one of several programs developed by the Department of Teacher Education, California State University, Hayward to meet the requirements of the Ryan Act.

The program is one of three post-baccalaureate single subject (secondary) programs, each of which operates autonomously with a team composed of a Teacher Education Department leader, faculty from other departments in the University, candidates, master teachers, administrators, and community persons.

The North County Program, now in its fourth year, evolved from experimental programs begun in 1969. It was felt at that time that a field-based program, tailored to meet the individual needs of candidates, and integrating the subject matter of the foundations courses with methods and student teaching would be more responsive to candidates' needs and help to soften the complaints we often heard about teacher preparation. In 1972-73, a grant from HEW helped us develop modules, purchase videotaping equipment, and operate a prototype Ryan program. The first official Ryan program was in 1973-74 and since then we have offered many improvements.

Applicants are interviewed in April by a team of master teachers, University faculty, candidates then in the program, community persons, and public school students. The screening committee is interested in the quality of experience each applicant has had with young people, especially those of diverse ethnic groups; the reasons for wanting to become a teacher; the applicant's philosophy; as well as articulateness, poise, and sense of humor.

Approximately 30 applicants in biological science, mathematics, and physical education are chosen to become members of our team. Everyone gathers for a

Welcome Party to get acquainted with each other. Candidates are encouraged to visit the schools, meet the administrators, observe potential master teachers, talk about the program with candidates teaching in the schools, and determine whether or not they would feel comfortable teaching in that particular school. Public school personnel are asked to make a decision about the potential candidate and placements are then made for the entire year.

During the last week in August we hold an orientation in which team members participate in helping the candidate anticipate the experience, start to make plans, and become familiar with professional and legal rights and responsibilities of teachers.

Each candidate takes part in the district, school, and departmental orientations in her/his assignment and starts teaching at least two classes on the first day, adding the third class (which is usually team-taught, in another subject) as soon as she/he feels comfortable.

Candidates are required to remain in the school all day and spend their afternoons planning their classes, setting up labs, visiting other classes, learning about the school and community from school personnel, participating in extra-instructional activities, attending meetings, tutoring, coaching, supervising noon hour activities, and conferring with parents.

Early in September, on a Saturday, we hold an all-day Retreat attended by all candidates, master teachers, and University faculty to gain a common understanding of the program, the competencies, and the responsibilities of each team member.

At the end of the first semester, assignments are changed. Each candidate has a six-dimensional experience, teaching in both Oakland (an inner-city district made up of diverse ethnic groups) and San Leandro (a predominantly Caucasian, suburban-type community.) Candidates teach in both a junior and senior high school.

We follow the public school calendar and the candidate, in the new assignment, starts a minimum of two classes and adds a third as soon as possible, teaching until the end of the public school year in June.

B. OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

The Ryan programs at our University are competency-based. Our faculty, in consultation with master teachers, candidates, and others has developed a set of common competencies which meet the guidelines established by the Commission on Teacher Preparation and Licensing. All candidates must demonstrate these competencies.

The North County Program differs from the others in that our team members believe that a candidate may enter our program with different degrees of competence, that each brings particular strengths and weaknesses to the classroom, and that it is more profitable for the candidate to spend her/his time on the latter than to become part of a lock-step program in which all candidates are required to perform the same tasks, write papers, and pass examinations.

Our team members further believe that a candidate coming into our program with a low level of competence in some area might not be expected to finally reach the same level as one entering with a high degree of competence in the same area. For example, one who has had a great deal of experience with young people before applying to the program might be expected to achieve a higher degree of teacher-pupil communication than one who enters with a limited contact with adolescents.

We believe, further, that the personality of the candidate as well as the subject she/he is teaching will influence the methods each will employ in seeking to gain competency in each area. Therefore, we allow them as much latitude as possible in making choices.

Our team members believe that the candidate should learn to evaluate her/his

own performance, knowing that this can only be accomplished in an atmosphere of mutual trust.

Thus, we have devised an individualized program, with no courses, in which the candidate agrees to work on certain competencies with the help of modules, guest speakers, and individual counseling. Beyond that, the candidate is free to devise her/his own methods of gaining competency which is demonstrated in most cases in the classroom or school setting.

At the end of each semester the candidate distributes a copy of her/his self-evaluation to each team member who has knowledge of her/his competence and invites them to an evaluation conference which is held at the school site, in which everyone is evaluated, as well as the entire program. Any team member may challenge the candidate's documentation and suggest she/he continue to attain a higher degree of competence or may suggest further documentation of ways in which the candidate has demonstrated competence.

The relationship which has grown between the faculty of the Department of Teacher Education and the faculty of the Departments of Biology, Mathematics, and Physical Education on our campus is due to the sharing of responsibilities on the team. We all feel a commitment to all candidates and not just to those who are teaching a particular subject. This has made the candidates more human-oriented and less subject matter oriented.

Our relationship with the field has been excellent. Oakland and San Leandro have cooperated with us since the inception of the program in 1969 and we have jointly worked out guidelines with both districts to govern procedures for placement, supervision, and evaluation. We have Criteria for the Selection of Master Teachers which guide us in selecting the most qualified people to work with us. All may earn University credit for participating in the program and in-service is a cooperative venture as we learn from each other.

Our relationship with the people of both communities is healthy. We encourage our candidates to volunteer for some type of community service, not only to learn more about the community in which they are teaching, but also to communicate with people in the community about their goals and expectations for their youngsters. We have a fairly good representation of community people at the screening interviews and the monthly program team meetings where periodically we ask them to identify resources in the community which candidates might employ in their teaching. For example, a doctor might come in and talk to a class about Sickle Cell Anemia; a retired person might share his hobby of collecting fossils; a member of the Oakland Raiders might discuss professional sports; someone might demonstrate ethnic food or dances; or a beauty operator might talk about grooming.

Finally, we attribute our excellent relationship with the public schools and communities to our field-based program. We are available, responsive to their needs, and willing to cooperate.

C. PERSONNEL INVOLVED

The North County Program Team is made up of the team leader from the Department of Teacher Education, one professor each from the Departments of Biological Science, Mathematics, and Physical Education, a professor in secondary reading methods, approximately 30 candidates, their master teachers, the administrators of the thirteen schools in which the candidates are teaching, community persons, and a few public school students. The team meets monthly to plan, implement, and evaluate the program. All decisions are made by the team and each member has one vote.

D. BUDGET

One of the weaknesses of the Ryan Act is that no money is provided to implement what has proved to be an expensive program.

Through the generosity of the San Leandro Unified School District we have a Center, located in the District Office Building which is adjacent to the BART and parking lots. Our Center is located near the line dividing Oakland and San Leandro so it is convenient for most team members. Nevertheless, we alternate between Oakland and San Leandro for our monthly team meetings. The SLUSD pays for the light, heat, and janitorial service. The University furnished tables, chairs, and paint and we decorated the Center with volunteer labor. The University pays the phone bill and allows University faculty up to 20¢ per mile for travel. The University contracts with the district for placement of candidates and pays the district about $3.00 per placement per semester. We have requested stipends for master teachers and community representatives, but there has been no response.

The program is also expensive with respect to faculty time. We have five professors on the team, each of whom gives many more hours than she/he would in teaching 3 or 4 courses on campus. Each professor must supplement her/his work in the program by teaching 1 or 2 courses each quarter to make up her/his load. We have been fortunate in keeping professors in the program only because they believe in what we are doing and get some personal satisfaction from providing the best experience possible for each candidate.

E. CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Each year we incorporate suggestions of the previous team into the new program, so we are constantly changing and improving.

Most of our candidates, due to a close working relationship, achieve a satisfactory degree of competency in all areas by June and we recommend them for a credential. In a few cases candidates drop out of the program to work for awhile and return after they have saved up some money. We have that flexibility.

In spite of the over-supply of teachers, especially in the Bay Area, most of

our candidates get teaching positions. We feel they are more employable because of their successful experience in an inner-city school, teaching at both the junior and senior high levels, teaching more than one subject, experience in extra-instructional and volunteer community work, and working with young people from diverse ethnic groups.

F. EVALUATION METHODS AND RESULTS

Evaluation is an integral part of the program, as evidenced by our team relationship, evaluation sessions, and final evaluation session at the last Program Team Meeting of the year. In addition, each candidate using the previously mentioned Criteria for the Selection of Master Teachers, evaluates her/his master teachers at the end of each semester. The candidate uses Criteria for the Selection of University Supervisors and Duties of the Team Leader to evaluate those professors. We have a final seminar in which we ask candidates to suggest changes in the program.

The Department of Teacher Education is now in the process of mailing out questionnaires to candidates who have become credentialed during the last three years and in January we plan to bring as many of them back and invite present candidates and master teachers to meet with us and explore ways in which our program has or has not prepared the new teachers.